

West assails federal spending during visit to Delray (Sun-Sentinel)

By David Dipino

U.S. Rep. Allen West decried what he characterized as runaway government spending during a recent visit to Delray Beach for the monthly luncheon of the Chamber of Commerce Chairman's Club.

West, a Republican who represents Florida's 22nd Congressional District, discussed unemployment, both nationally and in Florida, gas prices, taxes and the federal debt. Speaking at La Cigale Taste of the Mediterranean Restaurant, 253 SE Fifth Ave. in Delray Beach, he said 47 percent of the national debt is held by foreign nations.

"We're running deficits that are astronomical. We're still spending way too much," West said. "Unemployment in Palm Beach County is 11 percent. In Broward County, it's even higher. This is the longest depression era since the Great Depression. Black unemployment in Palm Beach County is 17 percent."

West discussed his proposal for a flat tax system and hailed the potential benefits of lowered business taxes.

"If we lower the competitive tax rate from 35 percent, where it currently stands, we can attract international businesses to South Florida," he said.

West also shared his views on Florida's schools.

"Teaching a kid to take a test is not teaching," he said.

West is a former lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army who served in both Operation Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom, receiving the Bronze Star.

He was introduced to about 50 Chairman's Club members by Michael Weiner, a local lawyer and president of the club.

"One thing about Allen West is that he always stays in touch with his constituency," Weiner said.

Gregg Weiss, the chamber's chairman of the board, said last month the Chairman's Club hosted former West Palm Beach Mayor Lois Frankel, West's Democratic opponent in the 2012 congressional election.

Dr. Craig Spodak of the Spodak Dental Group had met West once before. Spodak said he looked forward to hearing West speak once again.

"I think he's tremendous," Spodak said. "He has a rare trait in that he says exactly what he feels."

For entire story, click [here](#) .